

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the gentleman is aware, as all of us are, about the tremendous job losses that we have experienced in America of late, 650,000 plus jobs just last month.

There is an announcement yesterday that we all read about, that the card check bill was introduced. Along with that introduction, there was a new nonpartisan study that was published that predicts that passage of card check legislation will result in the immediate loss of 600,000 jobs.

So I would ask the gentleman, number one, when he expects to bring that card check bill to the floor, and if, in the interim, if he is considering that if the Senate is to act, and we are to act in these economic times, why would we be doing that if we know, through nonpartisan studies issued, that it's a job killer? Why would we be bringing that to the floor?

I yield further to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding. First of all, let me respond. We don't know that. Somebody reported that. We don't know that at all and, very frankly, we don't accept that figure. We don't accept the figure that we will, in fact, lose jobs.

We on this side of the aisle feel very strongly that the working men and women in this country have the right under law to organize and to bargain collectively for wages and benefits and working conditions. We think that is inherent in the rights, in the free market.

Very frankly, I would tell my friend that I have traveled, as he has, in many parts of the world, and rarely have I seen a successful democracy that didn't have a free trade union movement. So we feel very strongly about that. We feel very strongly about the right to organize, and that means that it is the employee's choice of how to organize.

Now, having said all that, let me also say that we have observed that there has been, in many ways, a relationship between the decline in union membership and a decline in the buying power of the American worker.

And the greatest disparity between what average workers make and what the bosses make now exist in our country to a greater extent than any other place in the world. We think that's a problem.

Consumerism is what drives this economy. Consumerism is down, incomes have been frozen, and you see, in my opinion, some of that result.

I don't, by any stretch of the imagination, want to say that the reason that we are in the decline that we are in today, and facing the challenge that we are today, is a direct result of the fact that union membership is down.

But, certainly, I believe that one of the results is the reduction in the buying power of average Americans in this country.

Now, having said that, we passed this bill. We passed it pretty handily. We

passed it in the last Congress, and it's our expectation that the Senate is going to be dealing with this legislation. They have not yet considered it; and it is my belief that we want to see whether they can pass it. We believe they can.

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We are going to be interested in what action they take.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

For the record, any democracy has also in it the elections that afford one the right to a private or secret ballot, which this bill completely takes away from the workers of this country.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CANTOR. Not yet, Mr. Speaker. I would say again that our economy is not just built on consumerism, our economy is built on investments and, frankly, the rebuilding of this economy will take place with job creation. And if we know that card check is a job-killer, folks across this country have got to be scratching their heads right now, wondering what in the world is Washington doing passing a piece of legislation that has been proven to kill jobs, not promote jobs.

Mr. HOYER. Let me say that, as I said before, we don't believe it's a job-killer, number one. But, number two, the gentleman and I have a disagreement factually as to what the bill does. We don't believe this kills the right of the employees to have a free election at all. Period.

We believe in fact the employee has that choice. The employee has the absolute right to respond, "No, I don't want to sign your card. Let's have an election. And I will sign it for that purpose, and that purpose only, to give you the 30 percent you need to get the election."

I think I'm right on 30 percent. But, in any event, we believe this is the employees' choice of how they want to organize, not the employer's choice.

So we are not and did not by passage of this legislation take away from the employees the right to have an election if they so choose.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

One remaining question, Mr. Speaker. Can the gentleman inform us as to whether the public lands bill will be brought back up under a rule in this House.

Mr. HOYER. We think the public lands bill that failed just by two votes yesterday is a very good bill. Overwhelming support. Essentially two-thirds of this House supported it. Two-thirds of the Senate supported it. Actually, I think it was probably even more than that.

In any event, we believe that bill is a very, very good bill. We are hopeful that a number of your members will conclude that maybe they should have voted for it. We will see on that.

So the answer to your question is that we may bring it up either by rule or by suspension, but we want to see

this bill pass. Having said that, let me say that Leader REID, the senior leader of the Senate, has indicated that he is going to file for cloture on that bill in the Senate tomorrow. So they may well move on it as well.

There are a number of options for us to pursue. As you will not be surprised, we are going to pursue the one we think is most successful.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, and I yield back.

#### ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2009

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning-hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

#### TRACKING THE TARP FUNDS

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Yesterday, our Domestic Policy Subcommittee held a hearing about how the Treasury Department has accounted for TARP funds. The taxpayers of the United States have already paid \$700 billion of their tax money into this bailout program. We found out that the Department of Treasury doesn't track the funds after they give them to the banks and, as a result, we have seen that, of these funds that were supposed to go to help the U.S. economy, \$8 billion has gone through Citigroup to Dubai; \$7 billion through Bank of America to China; \$1 billion through JPMorgan Chase to India.

I want the American taxpayers to think about that because with all the pressing needs we have here with the people who are starved for credit—businesses are dying because they can't get loans from banks—banks are taking our tax dollars and they're shipping them abroad.

It's time that we started to take care of things here at home. It's time that we started to ask the Treasury Department to keep track of these TARP funds and make sure that they're intended for the purpose that the American people want them to be spent for, and that is revive our American economy.

#### TRIBUTE TO LEE ANNENBERG

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to share with my colleagues the news of the passing earlier this morning of a very